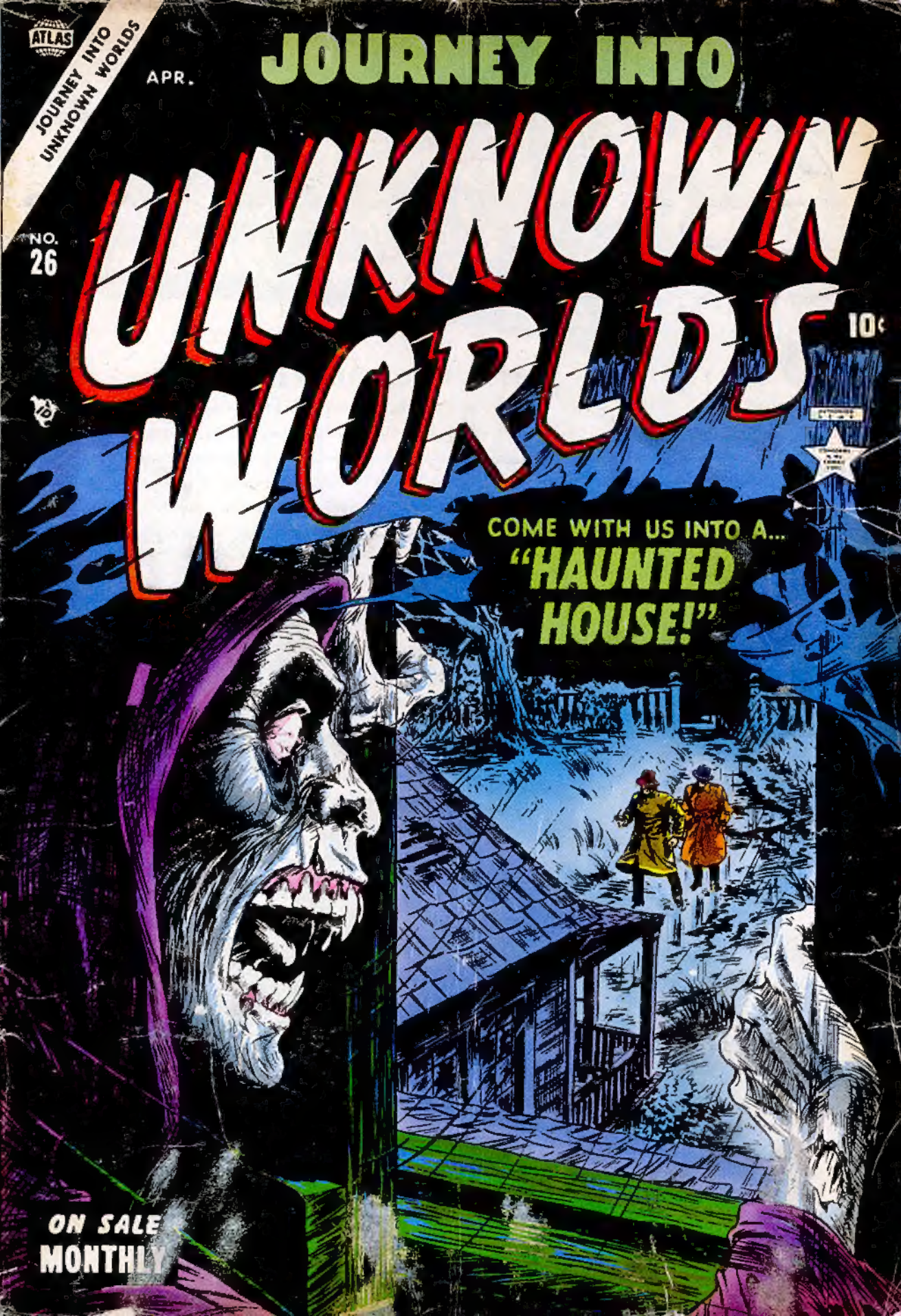
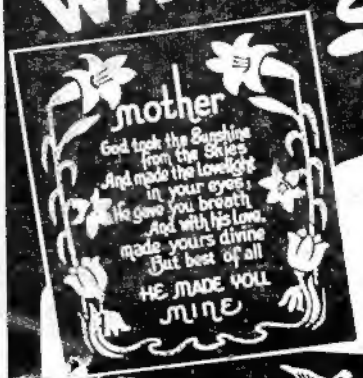

ATLAS
JOURNEY INTO UNKNOWN WORLDS
APR.
JOURNEY INTO
UNKNOWN WORLDS
NO. 26
10¢
COME WITH US INTO A...
"HAUNTED HOUSE!"
ON SALE
MONTHLY

DO YOU WANT SPENDING MONEY?

Sell these popular Patriotic and Religious Mottoes


mother
God took the Sunshine from the Skies
And made the Lovelight in your eyes;
He gave you breath
And with his Love,
made yours divine
But best of all
HE MADE YOU MINE

CHILDS PRAYER
Now I lay me down To Sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I should Die before I Wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take

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Just write and ask us to send you 40 of these beautiful glittering mottoes which the public likes so well. Sell them easily and quickly to your friends and neighbors for only 35¢ each. At the end of 14 days send back, if you wish, all mottoes you have not sold, and send us only 25¢ for each you have sold. You keep all the rest of the money.

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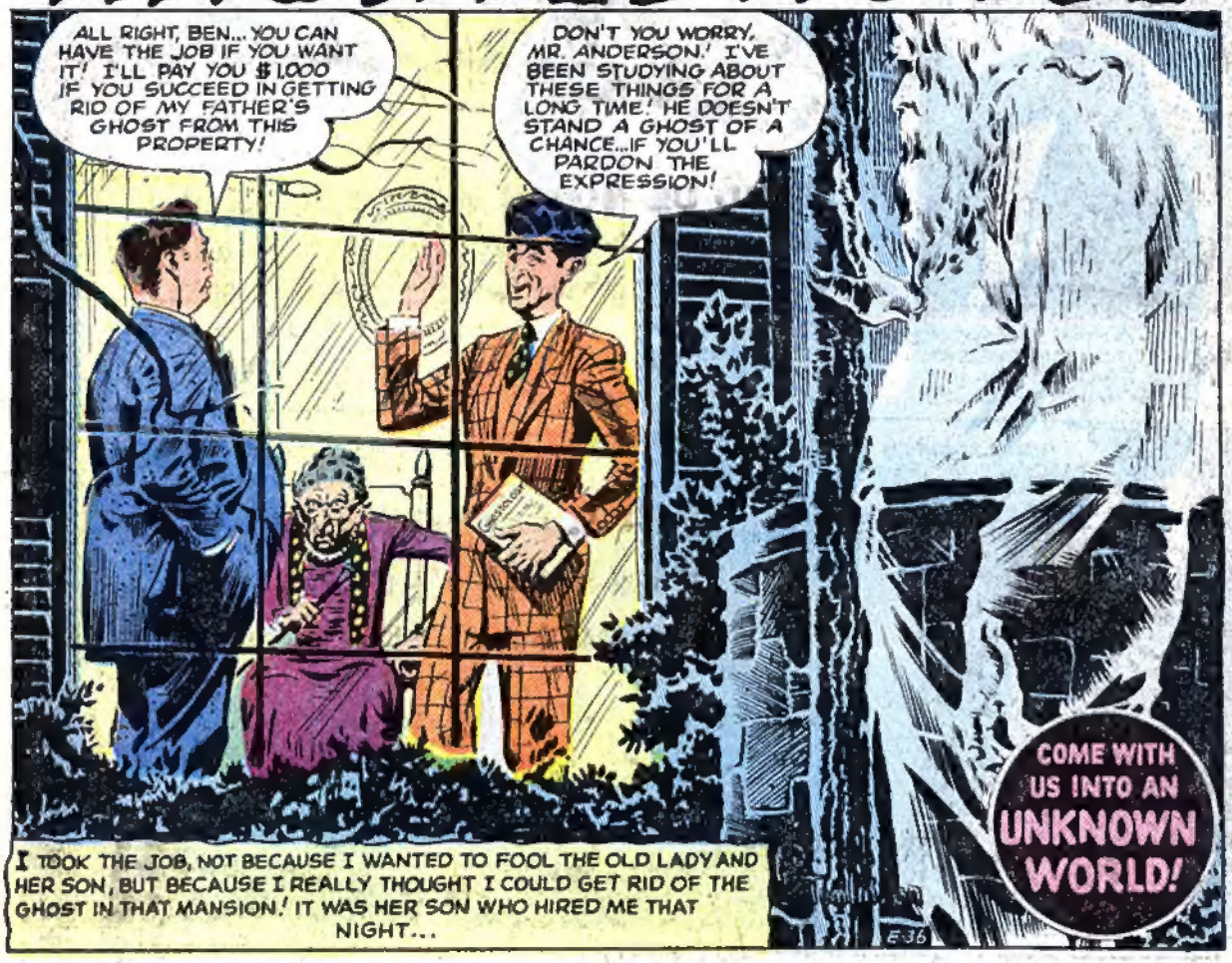
READY FOR ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLING TREK INTO *UNKNOWN WORLDS?* GOOD! HERE'S A CREEP WHO FANCIES HIMSELF AS A GHOST-CHASER...ODDLY ENOUGH, HE *IS* AN EXPERT AT IT... AND IS *HE* SORRY *NOW!*

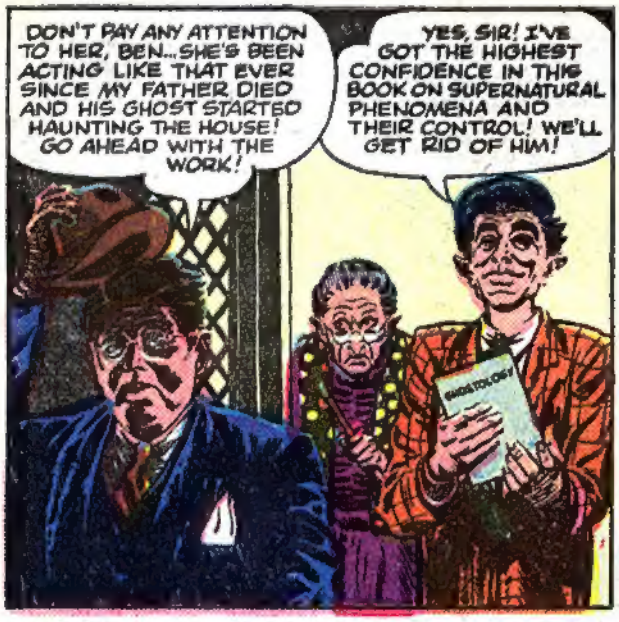
THE HAUNTED HOUSE


ALL RIGHT, BEN... YOU CAN HAVE THE JOB IF YOU WANT IT! I'LL PAY YOU $1,000 IF YOU SUCCEED IN GETTING RID OF MY FATHER'S GHOST FROM THIS PROPERTY!
DON'T YOU WORRY, MR. ANDERSON! I'VE BEEN STUDYING ABOUT THESE THINGS FOR A LONG TIME! HE DOESN'T STAND A GHOST OF A CHANCE...IF YOU'LL PARDON THE EXPRESSION!
COME WITH US INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD!
E-36

I TOOK THE JOB, NOT BECAUSE I WANTED TO FOOL THE OLD LADY AND HER SON, BUT BECAUSE I REALLY THOUGHT I COULD GET RID OF THE GHOST IN THAT MANSION! IT WAS HER SON WHO HIRED ME THAT NIGHT...

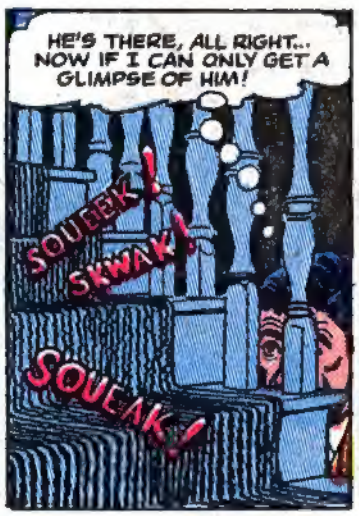
THEY'D BEEN HAVING LOTS OF TROUBLE WITH THE OLD MAN'S GHOST, AND WHEN THE NEIGHBORS COMPLAINED, HER SON HIRED ME TO GET THE THING OUT OF THERE...

SO LONG, BEN, AND LOTS OF LUCK! THE CHECK WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED HERE!
I'LL BE PICKING IT UP IN LESS THAN A WEEK, MR. ANDERSON...
NO! NO!


DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO HER, BEN...SHE'S BEEN ACTING LIKE THAT EVER SINCE MY FATHER DIED AND HIS GHOST STARTED HAUNTING THE HOUSE! GO AHEAD WITH THE WORK!
YES, SIR! I'VE GOT THE HIGHEST CONFIDENCE IN THIS BOOK ON SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA AND THEIR CONTROL! WE'LL GET RID OF HIM!
SPIRITOLOGY

I WORKED ON THE JOB FOR FOUR DAYS... WANDERING ON THE GROUNDS ALONE AT NIGHT BEFORE I GOT MY FIRST SIGNS DOWN IN THE CELLAR...

THEN I HEARD THE NOISES THAT I'D BEEN WAITING FOR...THE GROANS AND THE CLANKING OF CHAINS...THE EMPTY STAIRCASE THAT SQUEAKED...



BUT THE MOST HELPFUL CLUES OF ALL DIDN'T COME UNTIL A NIGHT LATER, WHEN I SAW THE MOVEMENT OF A TABLE WITH NO ONE ELSE AROUND...

STOP! LEAVE THIS HOUSE BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! GO AWAY, BEFORE YOU DISTURB THE DEAD! WE'RE HAPPY HERE THIS WAY!
PLEASE, MRS. ANDERSON! I'VE COME HERE TO DO A JOB, AND I CAN'T STOP NOW! I CAN ALMOST SEE HIM!

SUDDENLY I FELT THE COLDNESS SWEEP BY ME! HE WAS THERE... AND THEN I SAW THE BOARDS IN THE STAIRS BEND AS IF UNDER THE HEAVY TREAD OF SOMEONE! AND WHILE WE STARED, WE BOTH SAW...

IT'S HIM! I CAN SEE HIM! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS FOLLOW HIM BACK TO HIS RESTING PLACE...
NO! NO! HAVEN'T YOU DONE ENOUGH? GO... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

I IGNORED THE OLD LADY'S SCREAMS AND FOLLOWED THE GHOSTLY FORM OUT OF THE HOUSE...

IT GLIDED SMOOTHLY INTO THE YARD THROUGH ALL OBSTACLES IN ITS WAY...

AND AS I SAW THE DIRECTION IN WHICH IT WAS HEADING, I KNEW ITS DESTINATION...

IT WAS HEADED FOR THE OLD WELL THAT HAD BEEN BOARDED UP FOR MANY YEARS...

I KNEW I WAS GETTING CLOSER TO THE SOLUTION OF MY PROBLEM AS I SAW THE GHOST OF THE MURDERED MAN PASS RIGHT THROUGH THE SEALED OPENING OF THE WELL...

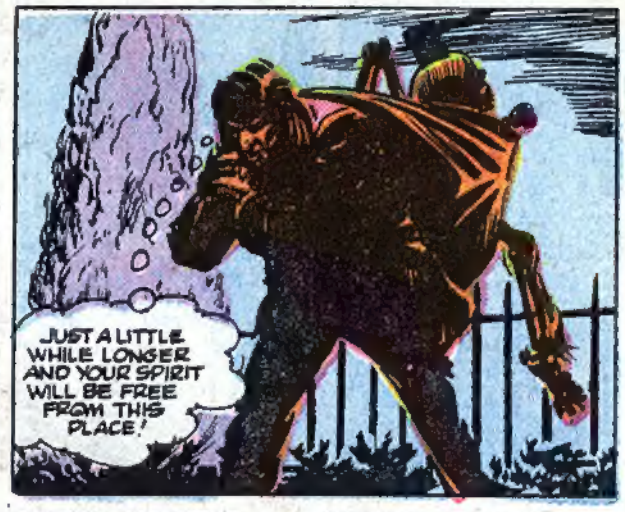
THIS IS MY PROPERTY AND I WANT YOU TO GET OFF IT AT ONCE! YOU'LL NEVER GET MY HUSBAND'S GHOST TO LEAVE, SO GO AWAY AND LEAVE US IN PEACE!
I'M SORRY, MRS. ANDERSON... BUT I'M ACTING UNDER ORDERS FROM YOUR SON! NOW, GET BACK IN THE HOUSE BEFORE I TIE YOU UP!

SHE FINALLY LEFT ME ALONE AND I WAS ABLE TO FINISH THE JOB OF OPENING UP THE OLD WELL...

I STOOD THERE A FEW MINUTES, UNABLE TO CONTROL THE SICKENING FEELING AT THE SIGHT OF THE OLD MAN'S REMAINS! HIS BONES LAY TWISTED AS IF HE HAD THRASHED ABOUT IN HIS LAST MOMENTS, AND IN HIS SKULL WAS BURIED AN AXE!

I FASTENED A HOOK ONTO THE END OF THE WELL LINE, AND LOWERED IT DOWN SO AS TO HOOK THE SKELETON ONTO THE END...

I MANAGED TO GET THE ROTTED SKELETON TO THE SURFACE WITHOUT BREAKING UP ANY OF THE BONES! I REMOVED THE AXE FROM ITS SKULL AND HEADED FOR THE BACK OF THE HOUSE WHERE THE VAT OF LIME WAS READY...

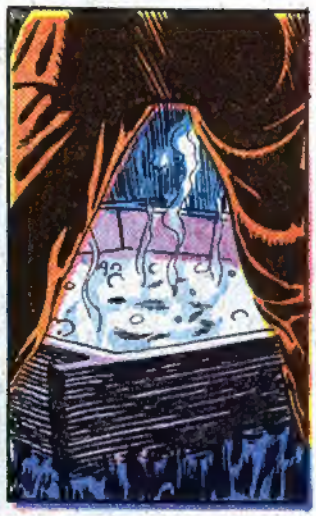


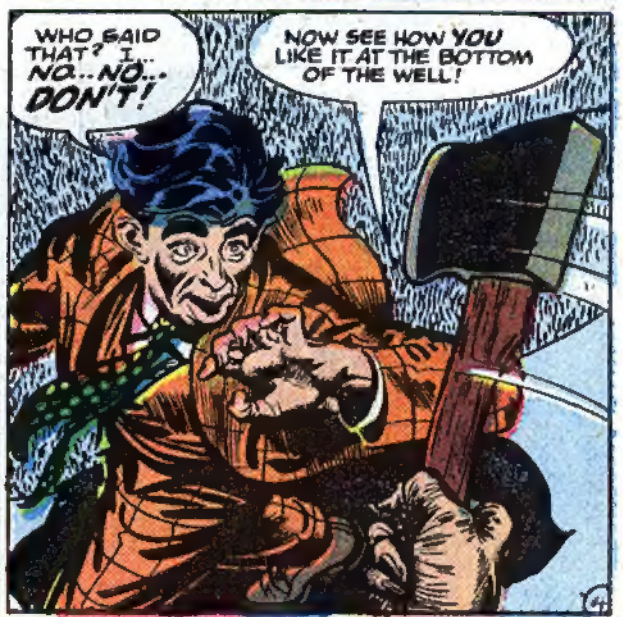
I SLID THE RATTLING FORM INTO THE VAT OF LIME, BEING CAREFUL NOT TO SPLASH THE CORROSIVE LIQUID...

IT BUBBLED AND FOAMED AROUND THE BONES OF THE CORPSE WHILE I ADDED THE SPECIAL MIXTURE I HAD COMPOUNDED ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS...

IT WAS A HORRIBLE SENSATION TO HEAR THE MOANING AND SCREAMING THAT CAME FROM THE BUBBLING...THE SPIRIT WAS PROTESTING THE DESTRUCTION!

BUT THEN THERE WAS A SUDDEN SILENCE AS THE LAST BIT OF EARTHLY REMAINS DISSOLVED INTO NOTHINGNESS!





PARALYZED BY THE SHOCK, I COULD ONLY THROW MY ARMS UP, BUT THAT WAS NO DEFENSE AGAINST MRS. ANDERSON'S AXE!

GOOD-BYE, YOU MEDDLER!

NO! NO! AIEEE!

THAT'S EXACTLY HOW IT HAPPENED! I WAS MURDERED BY THE SWEET LITTLE OLD LADY WHOSE HUSBAND WAS MURDERED IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY!

SHE DIDN'T WASTE MUCH TIME...JUST DRAGGED MY BODY ACROSS THE YARD TO THE OLD WELL WHERE I'D FOUND HER HUSBAND'S REMAINS...

THEN SHE FLUNG ME DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE WELL AND LAUGHED!

HEE! HEE! AND THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL *STAY*, MR. MEDDLER...DOWN THERE... AND I'LL BOARD IT UP AGAIN!

WELL, NOW MRS. ANDERSON'S HUSBAND'S GHOST IS GONE FROM THIS EARTH, BUT IT'S NO HELP TO *ME* BECAUSE NOW *MY* SPIRIT IS WANDERING AROUND HERE INSTEAD!

I'VE BEEN HAUNTING THIS PLACE A LONG TIME NOW, AND IT'S A PRETTY DULL ROUTINE...*BUT*...

NOW, MR. HALORAN, ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN GET RID OF THIS NEW GHOST THAT'S HAUNTING THE HOUSE?

I ASSURE YOU, SIR...HAVE NO FEAR!

THAT'S THE ONLY THING THAT BOTHERS ME...HER SON IS IN FROM TOWN AGAIN AND HE'S TALKING TO THAT UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR ABOUT GETTING RID OF *ME*...

SOMEBODY BETTER TELL HIM WHAT'S GOING ON HERE...BECAUSE *THIS HAS GOTTA STOP!*

THE END

ATLAS FOR THE BEST IN WEIRD STORIES LOOK FOR THE ATLAS SEAL ON THE COVER ATLAS

STRANGE JOURNEY

"FLIGHT SIXTEEN to New York ready for departure at gate. Passengers will please board immediately."

At the announcement over the loudspeaker system, conversations were cut short, coffee was left half-finished, hands shook quickly, and the passengers of Flight 16 hurried toward the waiting plane. A school-teacher, a scientist, two housewives and a businessman on vacation were listed for the flight, and five passengers boarded the plane at the gate. Perhaps if they had known then what would ultimately be their destination, they would not have laughed and talked casually as they seated themselves comfortably and prepared themselves for the take-off.

Julia Barlow, the schoolteacher, was the first to notice that something was strange about the flight. The plane had been up for almost an hour when she remembered her unfiinshed coffee back at the airport, which she had abandoned hurriedly when the take-off announcement was made. Anxious for some coffee, she looked about for the stewardess.

"That's strange," she mentioned to her seat partner, Dr. Tabert, the scientist, "I've never been on a New York flight where there wasn't at least one stewardess around." However, she thought nothing more about that, and forgot about the coffee.

It was Harriet Martin, the housewife, and her companion, Maggie North, who made the second discovery that something was wrong on this flight. Together they stared out the window into the fast-approaching night, intensely interested in anything they could see! This was their first flight, and they wanted to be able to tell their husbands about their adventure.

"That's very peculiar, I should think," Maggie said to Harriet, pointing out the window. "I knew that planes went pretty high, but I never thought the stars would look THIS big."

Dr. Tabert, hearing the conversation, looked amusedly out the window, certain that the two housewives were a bit overcome by their excitement. But suddenly his eyes widened, for they had had reason to wonder at the size and closeness of the stars.

"GOOD GRIEF," Dr. Tabert exclaimed loudly, "These stars . . . WE'RE . . . we're flying right among them! THIS . . . THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE!"

At the doctor's words, the others became alarmed. Miss Barlow looked out her window, and shouted, "Something's terribly wrong. We should be near New York now, but instead of landing, we're heading upwards ...AWAY FROM THE EARTH.

Mr. Haverstraw, the businessman, tried to be logical. "Someone get one of the pilots out here. There must be an explanation. Well, go ahead, one of you . . ."

He looked at the frightened faces of the others, and seeing that no one would move, he knocked on the door of the pilot's cabin. When he received no reply, he knocked again, this time more loudly. Just at that moment, a great flash of light and fire was seen outside and below the plane. The frightened passengers huddled at their windows, straining to see what had caused the explosion.

"LOOK!" someone shouted. "LOOK DOWN THERE! THAT BALL OF FIRE! IT'S . . . it's not the moon . . . or the sun . . . OH, HEAVEN HELP US . . . IT'S THE EARTH! SEE THERE? Fire and smoke, belching from those huge craters on the surface. What's happening . . . HAVE WE ALL GONE MAD?"

Mr. Haverstraw was perspiring. "Look . . . we must have an explanation. I've got to see the pilot."

Going to the cabin door again, he pounded furiously. When he

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT STORY...

How I foxed the Navy

by Arthur Godfrey

The Navy almost scuttled me. I shudder to think of it. My crazy career could have ended right there. Who knows, I might still be bumming Chesterfields instead of selling them.

To be scuttled by the Navy you've either got to do something wrong or neglect to do something right. They've got you both ways. For my part, I neglected to finish high school.

Ordinarily, a man can get along without a high school diploma. Plenty of men have. But not in the Navy. At least not in the U. S. Navy Materiel School at Bellevue, D. C., back in 1929. In those days a bluejacket had to have a mind like Einstein's. And I didn't.

"Godfrey," said the lieutenant a few days after I'd checked in, "either you learn mathematics and learn it *fast* or out you go. I'll give you six weeks." This, I figured, was it. For a guy who had to take off his shoes to count above ten, it was an impossible assignment.

I was ready to turn in my bell-bottoms. But an ad in a magazine stopped me. Here, it said, is your chance to get special training in almost any subject—mathematics included. I hopped on it. Within a week I was enrolled with the International Correspondence Schools studying algebra, geometry and trig for all I was worth.

Came week-end liberty, I studied. Came a holiday, I studied. Came the end of the six weeks, I was top man in the class. Within six weeks I had mastered two years of high school math, thanks to the training I'd gotten.

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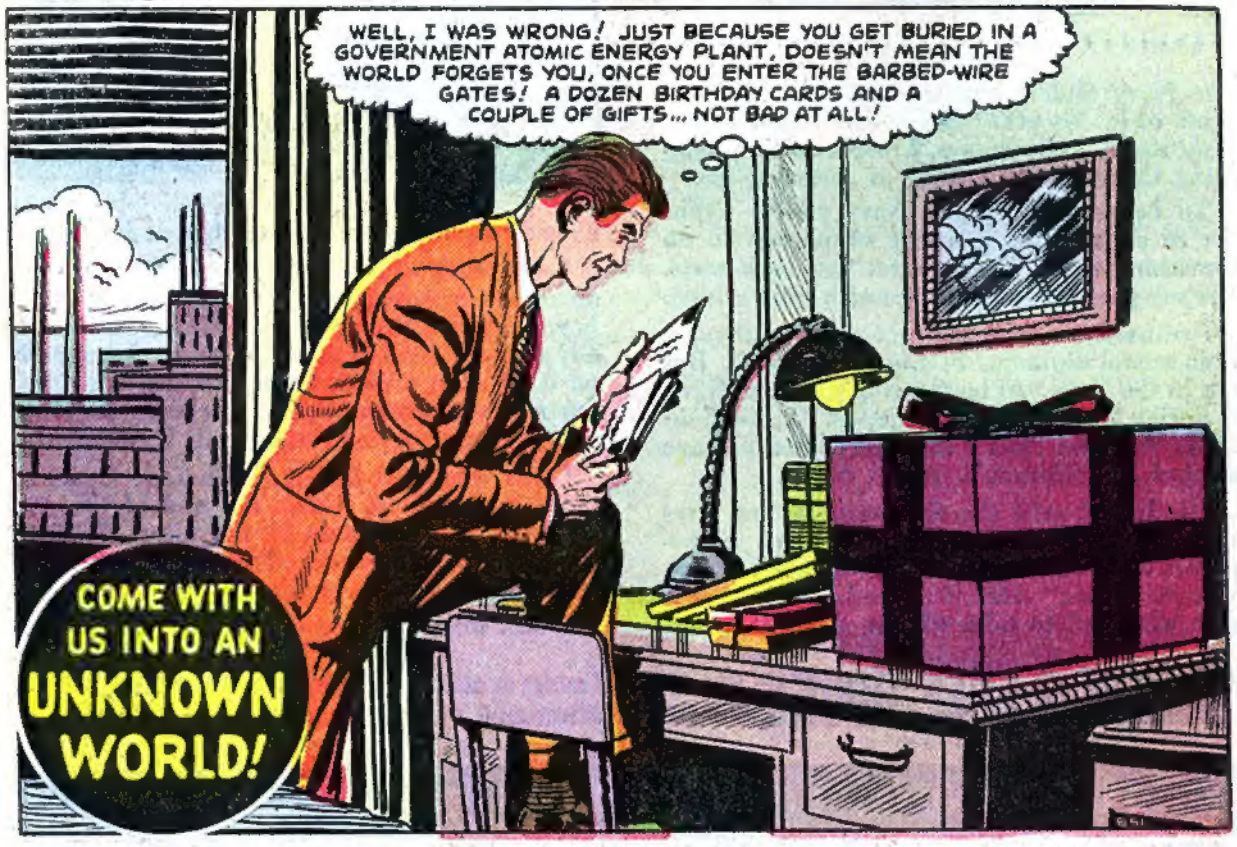
POOR BEN! WELL, ANYWAY, HE'S **STILL** GOT A **GHOST** OF A CHANCE! KINDA NICE TO RECEIVE BIRTHDAY PRESENTS, ISN'T IT? BUT IF **YOU** EVER GET A GIFT LIKE **THIS**, BETTER THROW IT AWAY, BEFORE SOMETHING **TERRIBLE** HAPPENS!

UNHARMED

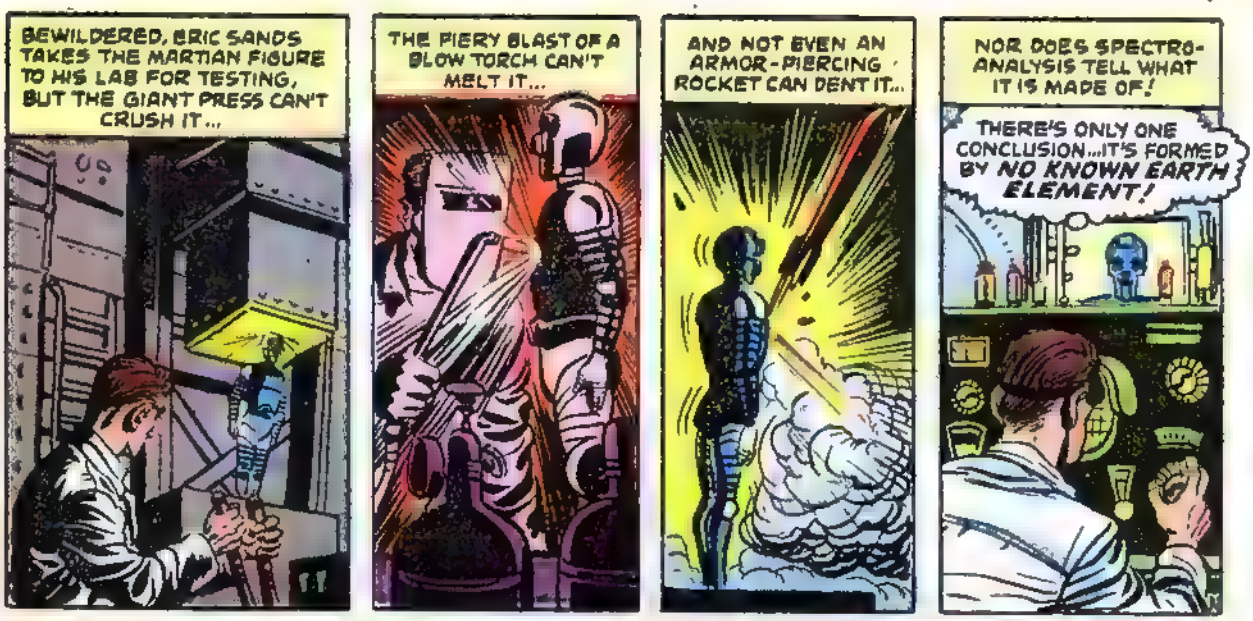

WELL, I WAS WRONG! JUST BECAUSE YOU GET BURIED IN A GOVERNMENT ATOMIC ENERGY PLANT, DOESN'T MEAN THE WORLD FORGETS YOU, ONCE YOU ENTER THE BARBED-WIRE GATES! A DOZEN BIRTHDAY CARDS AND A COUPLE OF GIFTS... NOT BAD AT ALL!
COME WITH US INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD!

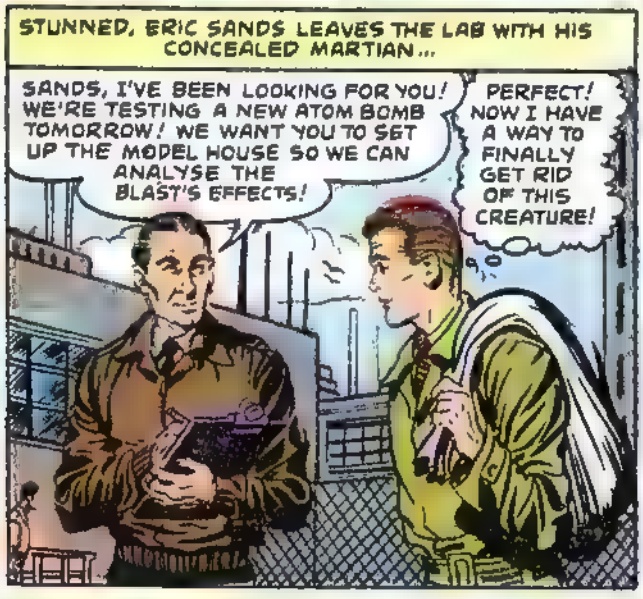
EXCITEDLY, ERIC SANDS RIPS OPEN HIS BIRTHDAY PRESENTS IN HIS ROOM, AND THEN ONE BY ONE, THE PHYSICIST-ENGINEER GLUMLY LOOKS AT THE TIES...

PUZZLED BY THE STRANGE GIFT, ERIC SANDS LOOKS AT THE CARD THAT CAME WITH IT... BUT JUST TWO WORDS ARE ON IT...
NO SIGNATURE! AND THIS CARD... I'VE NEVER FELT ANY PAPER WITH A TEXTURE LIKE THIS!
HAPPY BIRTHDA
A FINE KIT! YOU CAN'T EVEN OPEN IT! THERE'S NO LID, NO SEAMS, NO BUTTON TO PUSH! HOW ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE?
I WISH I COULD OPEN... GREAT SCOTT! IT'S STARTING TO OPEN!
AN INTERNAL SLIDING PANEL! AND IT ROLLED BACK WHEN I THOUGHT OF OPENING IT! WELL, THERE'S ONE WAY TO FIND OUT! LET'S SEE IF I CAN "THINK" IT TO CLOSE!
IT'S CLOSING! I DON'T KNOW WHO SENT THIS OR WHAT THIS GAG IS ALL ABOUT, BUT THIS BOX SEEMS TO WORK BY TELEPATHY!
CERTAIN THE KIT IS SOME SCIENTIFIC FRIEND'S CLEVER JOKE, ERIC SANDS ONCE MORE OPENS THE BOX AND DUMPS ITS CONTENTS ONTO HIS BED! BEFORE HIM LIES A WEIRD ARRAY OF TUBES AND VIALS...
HERE I AM, A MASTER ENGINEER IN THE NUCLEAR PHYSICS FIELD, AND I CAN BARELY KEEP UP WITH THE CONSTRUCTION CONCEPTS IN THIS BOOK!
MAKE-A-MARTIAN HANDBOOK
FASCINATED BY THE CHALLENGE OF THE ADVANCED CONSTRUCTION IDEAS IN THE BOOK, ERIC BEGINS TO ASSEMBLE A MARTIAN FROM THE STRANGE KIT! BUT HOURS LATER, WEARY FROM CONCENTRATION, HE LOOKS AT HIS WORK...
WHY AM I WASTING MY TIME? THE TERMS IN THE INSTRUCTION BOOK ARE DOUBLE-TALK! SOMEONE'S PLAYING AN INVOLVED JOKE ON ME! I'LL FIND OUT WHO IN THE MORNING!
2

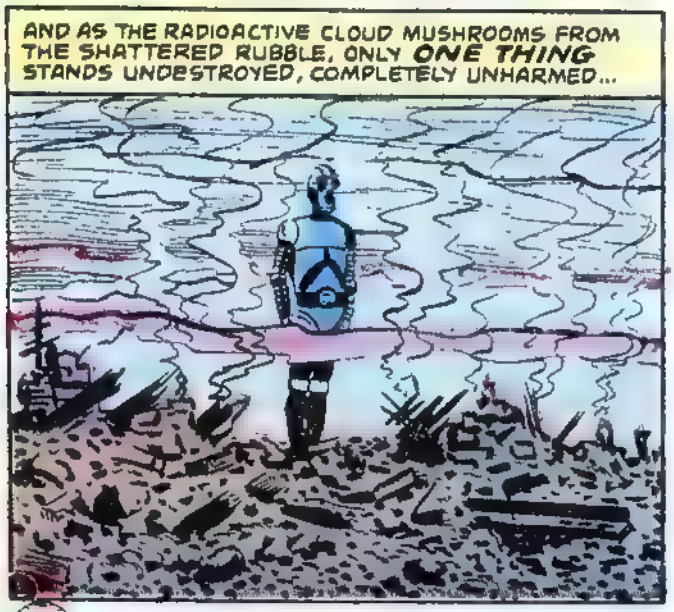
BUT THE NEXT DAY, AT THE ATOMIC LAB, ERIC SANDS QUESTIONS HIS COLLEAGUES IN VAIN, AND AT HIS DORM...
NO, I DIDN'T PUT ANY LARGE PACKAGE IN YOUR ROOM YESTERDAY... JUST SOME SMALL TIE BOXES!
THAT'S FUNNY... IT WAS THERE, BUT NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE SENT IT OR KNOWS HOW IT GOT THERE!
MAYBE I'LL FIND OUT WHY IT WAS SENT TO ME IF I PUT THE MARTIAN TOGETHER!
STARTING FRIDAY EVENING, ERIC BEGINS TO ASSEMBLE THE STRANGE CREATURE, SLOWLY, LABORIOUSLY, FOLLOWING THE COMPLICATED INSTRUCTIONS...
MAKE-A-MARTIAN
AND COX
ENGROSSED IN HIS WORK, THE HOURS PASS, AND ERIC SANDS BUILDS A STARTLING MONSTER..
IT'S FANTASTIC! THIS IS NO SIMPLE TOY DOLL! I'VE PUT INTERNAL ORGANS AND NERVE FIBERS INSIDE THIS CREATURE! THE JOKER WHO MADE THIS KIT SURE TOOK IT SERIOUSLY!
NOW FOR THE CLOTHES, AND MY MARTIAN IS FINISHED!
ONE FINAL STEP IS LEFT, AND CAREFULLY OBEYING THE INTRICATE WIRING DIRECTIONS, ERIC SANDS CONNECTS THE MARTIAN TO A QUEER ELECTRICAL AFFAIR THE BOOK CALLS A "VITALIZER"!
NOW THAT THING HAS BEEN VITALIZED! I GUESS IT'S SUPPOSED TO START MOVING ON ITS OWN!
BUT THE COMPLETED MARTIAN DOESN'T MOVE! THE GRIM FIGURE STANDS MOTIONLESS WHERE ITS CREATOR PLACES IT...
IF THIS BLASTED THING DOESN'T MOVE, WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF ALL THAT WORK IN PUTTING IT TOGETHER?
3

MAYBE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO TIE STRINGS TO IT AND USE IT AS A PUPPET... BUT I CAN'T EVEN BEND THESE ARMS NOW!
I'VE WASTED A PERFECTLY GOOD WEEK END OVER IT! I'D SURE LIKE TO FIND THE WISE GUY WHO SENT ME THIS STUPID THING!
I THREW THE FIGURE WITH ALL MY MIGHT... BUT IT'S UNHARMED! AND THIS HARD WOODEN FLOOR HAS BEEN DEEPLY CUT! I WONDER HOW STRONG THIS MARTIAN IS!
EVEN A DIAMOND, THE HARDEST SUBSTANCE KNOWN, CAN'T MAKE A MARK ON IT! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS METAL IS MADE OF, BUT I'LL FIND OUT IN THE LAB TOMORROW!
PLACING THE CREATURE ON HIS NIGHT TABLE, ERIC SANDS TURNS OUT THE LIGHT! BUT AS HE CLOSES HIS EYES AN EERIE FEELING OF UNEASINESS MAKES HIS SLEEP FITFUL...
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT I'D ALMOST SWEAR THAT MARTIAN IS A LIVING THING AND IS WATCHING ME!
FINALLY, MORNING COMES...
NO... JUST IMAGINATION! I SHOULD KNOW IT COULDN'T BE LIVING... I PUT IT TOGETHER!
LOCKING HIS ROOM SECURELY, ERIC SANDS GOES TO WORK! BUT WHEN HE RETURNS, HE STARES INCREDULOUSLY AT THE NIGHT TABLE...
I TOLD THE JANITOR NOT TO ENTER, AND HE HAS THE ONLY OTHER KEY... BUT THE SCRATCHES ON THE NIGHT TABLE PROVE IT... THE MARTIAN MOVED!
4

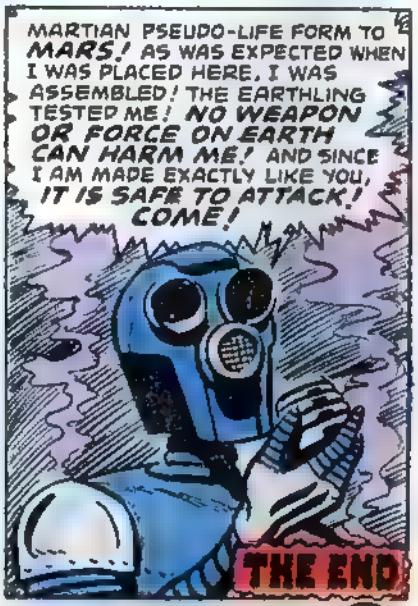

BEWILDERED, ERIC SANDS TAKES THE MARTIAN FIGURE TO HIS LAB FOR TESTING, BUT THE GIANT PRESS CAN'T CRUSH IT...
THE FIERY BLAST OF A BLOW TORCH CAN'T MELT IT...
AND NOT EVEN AN ARMOR-PIERCING ROCKET CAN DENT IT...
NOR DOES SPECTRO-ANALYSIS TELL WHAT IT IS MADE OF!
THERE'S ONLY ONE CONCLUSION...IT'S FORMED BY NO KNOWN EARTH ELEMENT!


STUNNED, ERIC SANDS LEAVES THE LAB WITH HIS CONCEALED MARTIAN...
SANDS, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU! WE'RE TESTING A NEW ATOM BOMB TOMORROW! WE WANT YOU TO SET UP THE MODEL HOUSE SO WE CAN ANALYSE THE BLAST'S EFFECTS!
PERFECT! NOW I HAVE A WAY TO FINALLY GET RID OF THIS CREATURE!

WHEN ERIC SANDS FINISHES WIRING HIS DELICATE GAUGES TO THE EQUIPMENT IN THE TARGET HOUSE, HE ADDS A FINAL TOUCH... HE LEAVES THE MARTIAN FIGURE *INSIDE!* THE AREA IS CLEARED, AND IN A BLINDING FLASH, THE HOUSE IS ATOMIZED!


AND AS THE RADIOACTIVE CLOUD MUSHROOMS FROM THE SHATTERED RUBBLE, ONLY *ONE THING* STANDS UNDESTROYED, COMPLETELY UNHARMED...

THEN SUDDENLY, THE MARTIAN FIGURE MOVES! ITS WEIRD ARM LIMB CLUTCHES A STRANGE RADIO AND AN ALIEN VOICE SPEAKS ON EARTH...


MARTIAN PSEUDO-LIFE FORM TO *MARS!* AS WAS EXPECTED WHEN I WAS PLACED HERE, I WAS ASSEMBLED! THE EARTHLING TESTED ME! *NO WEAPON OR FORCE ON EARTH CAN HARM ME!* AND SINCE I AM MADE EXACTLY LIKE YOU, *IT IS SAFE TO ATTACK! COME!*
THE END

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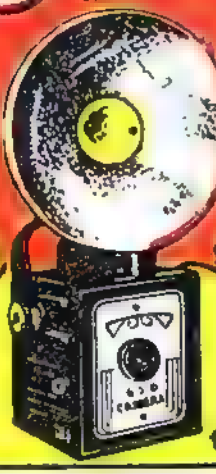
NOTICE YOU MUST USE THE COUPON BELOW IN ORDER TO GET THESE SPECIAL PRICES. This offer will not be repeated. Supplies limited Order while they last!



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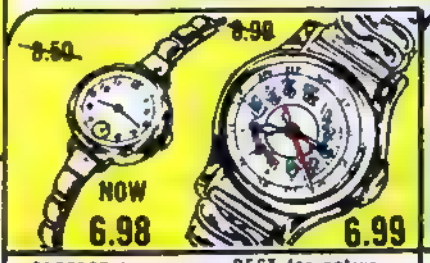

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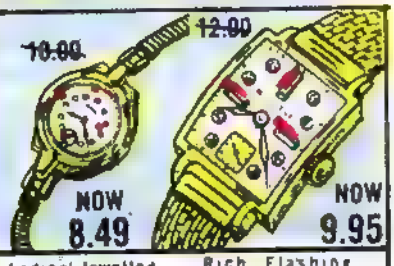

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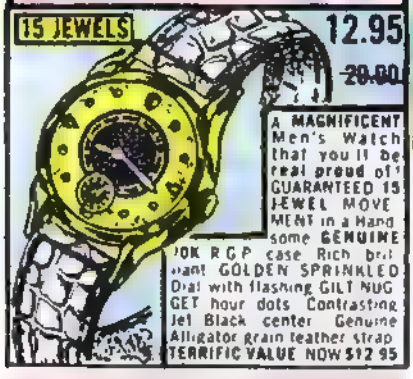

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...CONTINUED

saw the door open a crack, he felt a little better.

When the door was half-opened, the passengers chorused their questions. "Pilot, what's going . . . oh, NO! NO . . . IT CAN'T . . . IT CAN'T BE!"

And then suddenly everyone was quiet. Only the humming of the plane as it glided through the skies disturbed the silence. And framed in the doorway of the pilot's cabin was the co-pilot.

The co-pilot, with the body of a man and the head of an INSECT.

Dr. Tabert was the first to utter a word. Unable to believe what he saw was really true, he muttered, "W-who are you? W-what kind of a j-joke . . . is this? What's going on?"

When the co-pilot opened his mouth, his words buzzed, like the drone of an insect. "Joke? You don't undersstand . . . thisss iss no joke."

The silence prevailed again for a moment then the stifled screams of Harriet and Maggie shattered it once more. Julia Barlow, terrified herself, tried to calm them, while she kept one fearful eye on the thing before her.

"Don't try to leave," the co-pilot warned, seeing Mr. Haverstraw start for the emergency door, "for you wouldn't even fall. You'd float about helplessly, for we are above the atmosphere, and gravity no longer rulesssss".

The insect-man had a short discussion with the pilot inside the cabin, then continued, "Everything will be explained in time to you Earth beingsssss. The pilot informssss me we will land in a moment."

The plane jolted to a stop moments later. It was then that the passengers noticed that the pilot, too, was one of the strange insectmen.

The five people were led through a maze of hallways, until they reached a large room which was lit by the flitting light of fireflymen. They were pushed toward the far end of the room, where a huge insect man, more horrible than even an ordinary insect could be, sat enthroned.

"Welcome, welcome to our planet, Earth-beingsss" he hissed. Seeing the dazed expressions on the faces of the newcomers, he continued to talk. "I sssee you are puzzzzled. Lissten carefully, and I shall explain. We, the insect-men, have invaded your planet Earth, and dessstroyed it. No doubt you ssaw the explosion from the plane."

At the sound of gasps from the group of Earth-beings, the king insect-man emitted a frightful hiss that startled them into a horrified silence.

Then he continued. "Dr. Tabert. Yes, I know your name. You . . . you have spent years of your life dissecting insects on earth."

"Yes, but . . . I'm a scientist . . . that is my work!" Dr. Tabert muttered.

"SILENCE! the king insect ordered. "And you two housewivessss . . . how many times have you poured boiling water on ant-hills outside your home?"

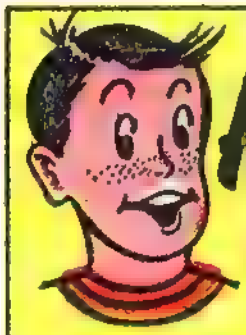
Before the two women could speak, he put up his hand, indicating that he wished to speak further. "Miss Barlow, as a schoolteacher, how many butterflies are pinned weekly to the bulletin board in your classroom as a class project? And Mr. Haverstraw, the fly-paper that hangs in your store has meant death for many of my fellow-insects."

The insect-man knew the earth beings were frightened and he smiled. Then his face changed as he said, "You . . . the five of you . . . were chosen as representative of the now otherwise-extinct Earth race. Yessss . . . we too, on this planet, have methods of torturing helpless creatures. Boiling water . . . and experimenting scientists and teachers . . ."

Looking sternly at the terrified group, he ordered, "Guards! TAKE THEM AWAY . . . and lead them all to the torture chambers. Let them all experience what our own people have experienced at their hands."

And the five representatives of the destroyed Earth, were led away to face their doom, screaming, kicking, pleading.

THE END A-633



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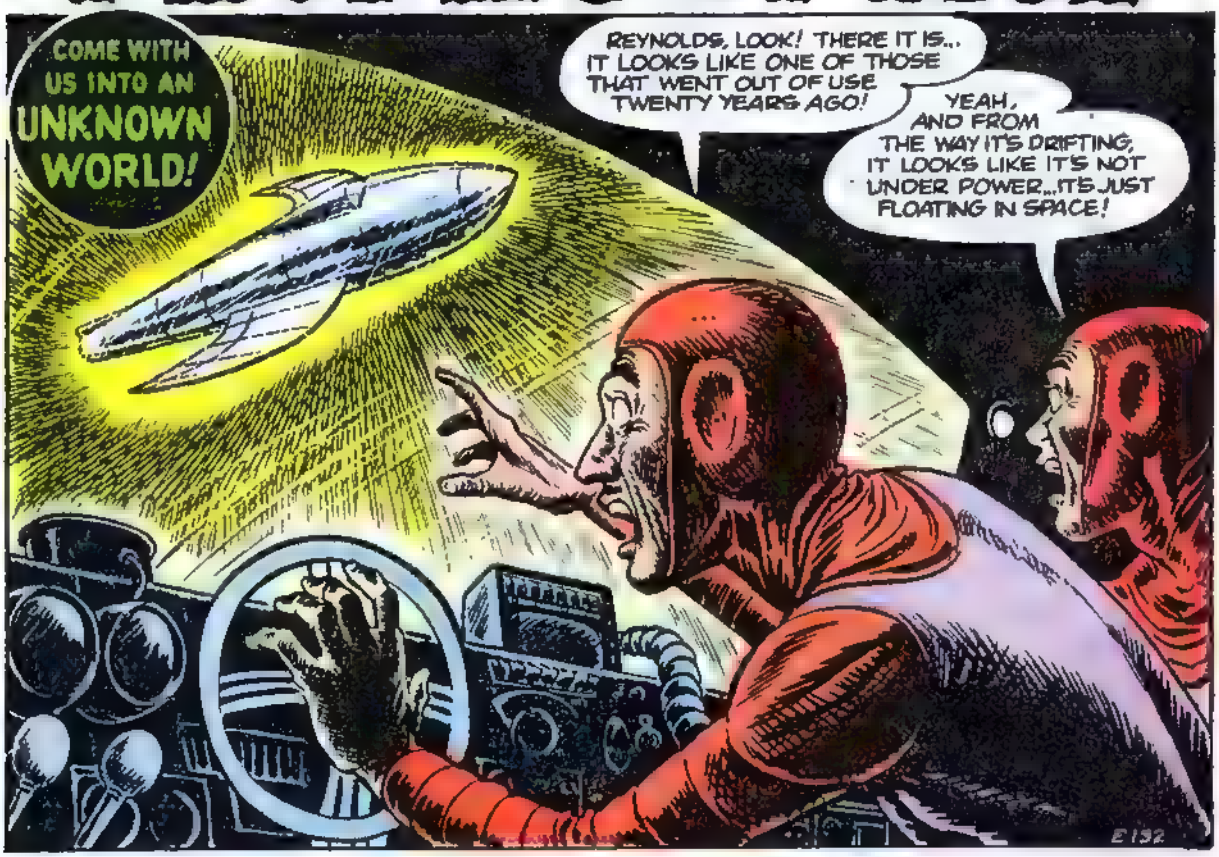
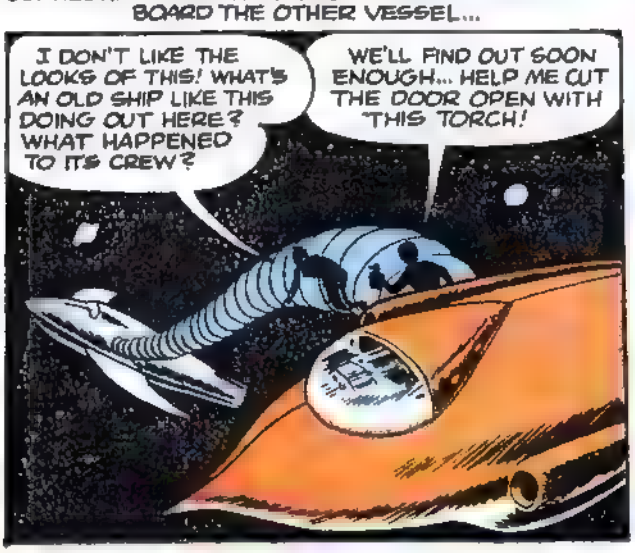
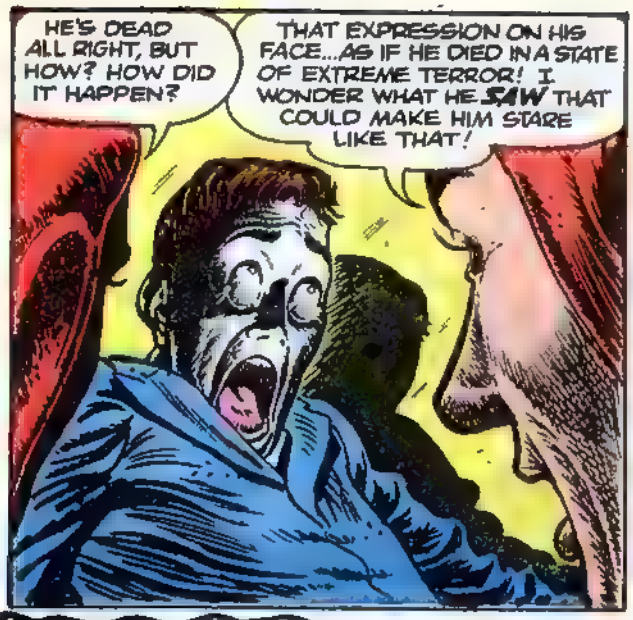
KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SKIES, CHUM... THE **MARTIANS** ARE ON THEIR WAY! AND AS LONG AS WE'RE TALKING ABOUT OUTER SPACE, LET'S SEE WHAT'S COOKIN' WITH THESE TWO SPACE TRAVELERS! BEFORE IT'S ALL OVER, THEY'LL WISH THEY'D STAYED HOME!

IT FLOATS IN SPACE

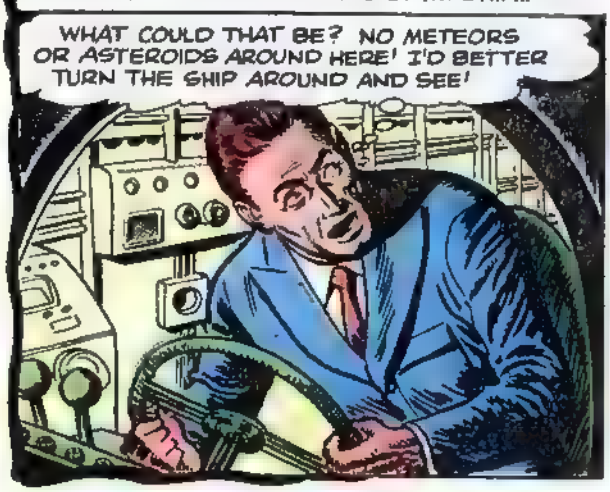

COME WITH US INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD!
REYNOLDS, LOOK! THERE IT IS... IT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THOSE THAT WENT OUT OF USE TWENTY YEARS AGO!
YEAH, AND FROM THE WAY IT'S DRIFTING, IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S NOT UNDER POWER...IT'S JUST FLOATING IN SPACE!
E 132

THEY MANEUVERED THEIR SHIP ALONGSIDE THE OLD WRECK, STOPPED THE ENGINES, AND SENT OUT THE CONNECTING TUBE THAT WOULD PERMIT THEM TO BOARD THE OTHER VESSEL...

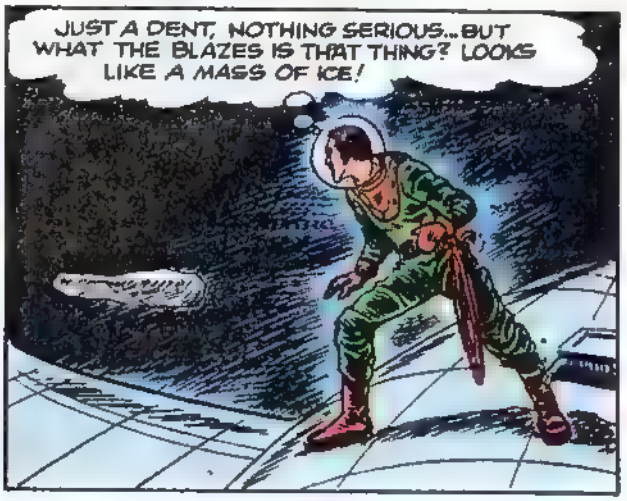

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS! WHAT'S AN OLD SHIP LIKE THIS DOING OUT HERE? WHAT HAPPENED TO ITS CREW?
WE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH... HELP ME CUT THE DOOR OPEN WITH THIS TORCH!


HE'S DEAD ALL RIGHT, BUT HOW? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
THAT EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE...AS IF HE DIED IN A STATE OF EXTREME TERROR! I WONDER WHAT HE SAW THAT COULD MAKE HIM STARE LIKE THAT!

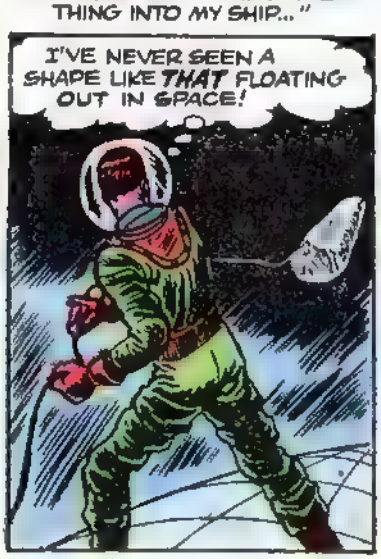
"SEPTEMBER 5, 2005 - 0800 HOURS: I WAS CRUISING OFF MARS TODAY, GETTING READY FOR MY RETURN TRIP TO EARTH! WEATHER AND VISIBILITY WAS GOOD, BUT SUDDENLY I HEARD SOMETHING CRASH AGAINST THE SIDE OF MY SHIP..."



"I BROUGHT MY SHIP AROUND, GOT INTO MY SPACE SUIT AND WENT OUT THROUGH THE PRESSURE LOCK TO SEE WHAT HAD HIT ME, AND IF ANY DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE TO MY HULL!"



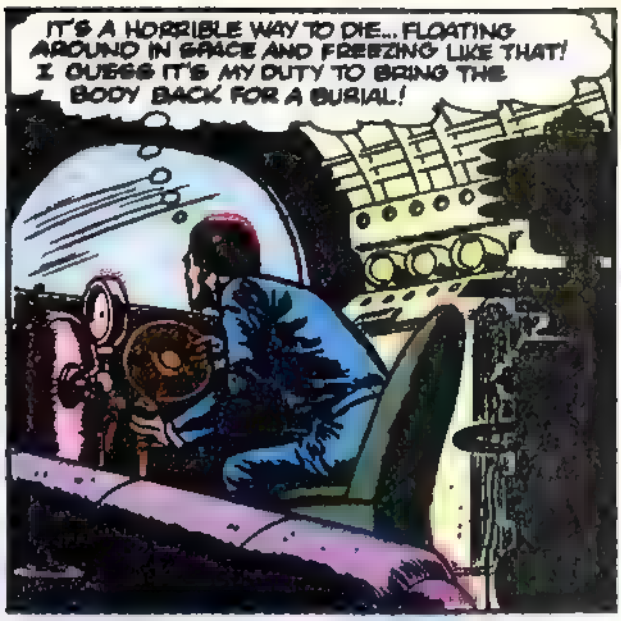
"I THREW OUT A GRAPNEL HOOK AND STARTED HAULING THE THING INTO MY SHIP..."

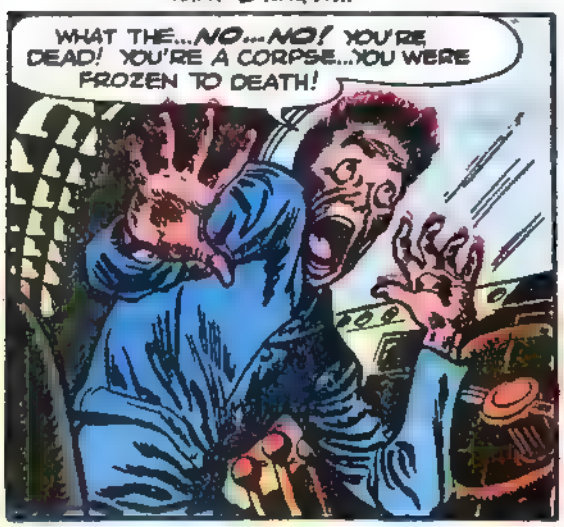


"IT WAS TOO DARK OUT FOR ME TO GET A GOOD LOOK AT WHAT I'D HAULED IN, SO I JUST SLID IT THROUGH THE PRESSURE HATCH AND FOLLOWED IT INSIDE..."

"IT WAS A HORRIBLE SIGHT TO SEE...A HUMAN BEING FROZEN SOLID BY THE COLDNESS OF SPACE! I COULD TELL BY THE MARK ON THE CORPSE'S FOREHEAD THAT HE WAS AN ESCAPING CONVICT WHO HAD NEVER MADE IT ALIVE...

HE WAS PROBABLY HEADED OUT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM, TRYING TO ESCAPE TO ANOTHER GALAXY! I GUESS HE COLLIDED WITH ANOTHER SHIP OR A METEOR...THEN FROZE TO DEATH OUT IN SPACE!


IT'S A HORRIBLE WAY TO DIE... FLOATING AROUND IN SPACE AND FREEZING LIKE THAT! I GUESS IT'S MY DUTY TO BRING THE BODY BACK FOR A BURIAL!


"I WAS TOO BUSY HANDLING THE SHIP TO REALIZE WHAT HAD HAPPENED, AND IT WAS ONLY WHEN I HEARD A NOISE BEHIND ME, THAT I KNEW..."
WHAT THE...NO...NO! YOU'RE DEAD! YOU'RE A CORPSE...YOU WERE FROZEN TO DEATH!

THAT'S WHERE YOU ARE MISTAKEN, MY FRIEND! THE FREEZING PROCESS PRESERVED MY BODY IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION! I'M VERY MUCH ALIVE, AND IF YOU WANT TO LIVE, YOU'LL OBEY MY ORDERS!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE...

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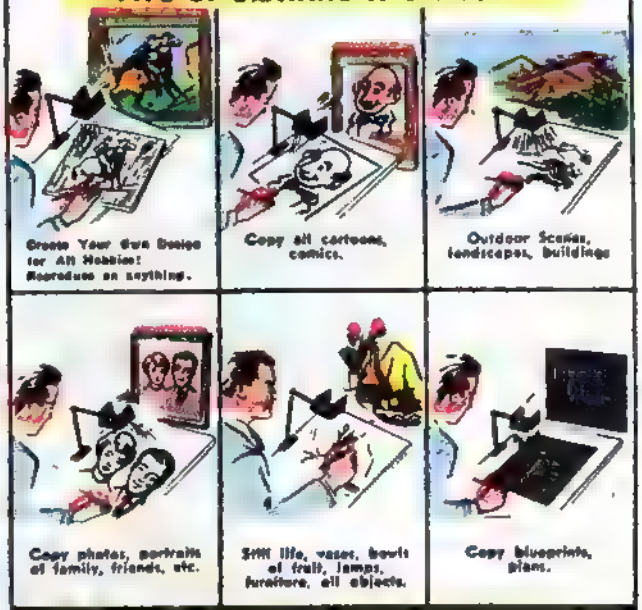

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I WAS HEADED FOR EARTH TO BURY YOU..BUT NOW, YOU CAN JUST GO FREE!
BURY ME? THAT'S WHAT THEY WANTED TO DO TO ME A LONG TIME AGO... BUT I ESCAPED! I'M NOT GOING BACK TO LET THEM GET ME AGAIN!

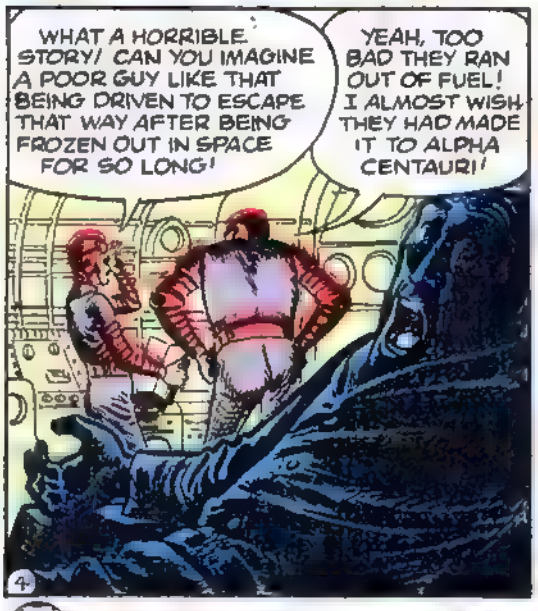
BUT I'VE GOT TO HEAD FOR EARTH! THEY'RE EXPECTING ME... AND MY FAMILY IS...
WE'RE NOT GOING BACK! TURN THIS SHIP AROUND AND HEAD HER OUT TOWARDS ALPHA CENTAURI!

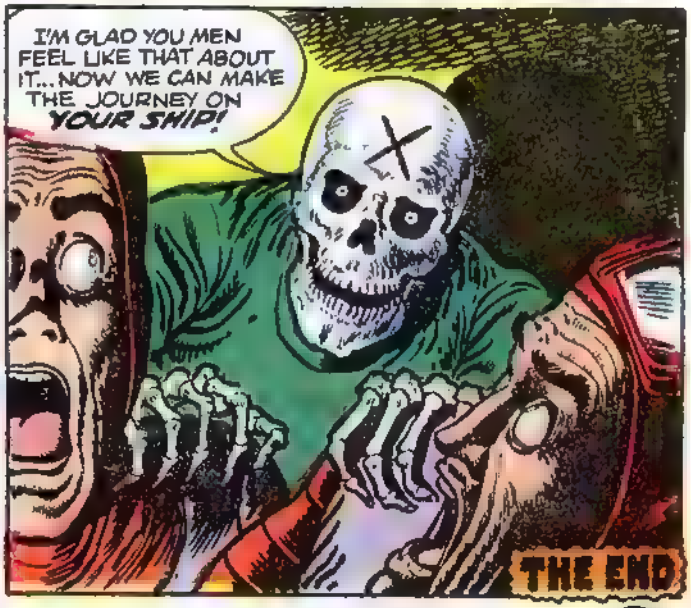
"I DID AS HE ORDERED, EVEN THOUGH WE BOTH KNEW THAT THERE WASN'T ENOUGH FOOD ON BOARD FOR THAT KIND OF A JOURNEY..."

(GASP!) WATER...FOOD.. WE'LL BOTH STARVE TO DEATH LIKE RATS IN A TRAP!
SHUT UP! I'LL MAKE IT... I'LL GET THERE IF IT TAKES ALL ETERNITY! NOTHING CAN STOP ME!

"BUT SOON AFTER WE RAN OUT OF FOOD AND WATER, WE ALSO RAN OUT OF FUEL! WE HEARD THE CHOKING THROB OF THE HUNGRY ENGINES, AND THEN, AS THEY WENT DEAD, THE SHIP WAS OUT OF CONTROL..."

"NOW, IN THE SILENCE OF SPACE, I CAN ONLY SIT HERE AND WAIT FOR THE END TO COME! WE'RE DRIFTING THROUGH THE VOID AND I FEEL THAT I AM GOING TO DIE...BUT HE KEEPS SCREAMING LIKE A MADMAN..."


WHAT A HORRIBLE STORY! CAN YOU IMAGINE A POOR GUY LIKE THAT BEING DRIVEN TO ESCAPE THAT WAY AFTER BEING FROZEN OUT IN SPACE FOR SO LONG!
YEAH, TOO BAD THEY RAN OUT OF FUEL! I ALMOST WISH THEY HAD MADE IT TO ALPHA CENTAURI!
4



ATLAS FOR THE BEST IN WEIRD STORIES LOOK FOR THE ATLAS SEAL ON THE COVER ATLAS

NO WEIRD MAG WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT A VISIT TO THE GRAVEYARD, SO HERE WE ARE SHADOWING A JEWEL THIEF WHO FIGURES HE'S GOT THE BEST HIDING PLACE IN THE WORLD! THE TROUBLE IS, IT'S TOO GOOD!

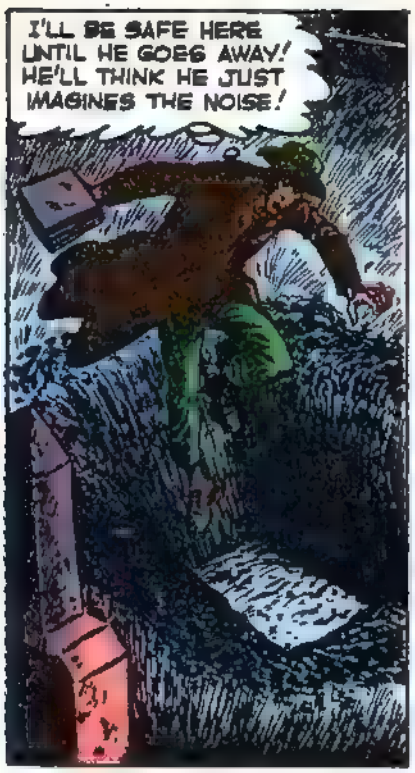
THE HIDING PLACE

COME WITH US INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD!
...TO HIS FINAL RESTING PLACE, THERE TO LIE ALONE...
ALONE? NO... NOT ALONE! AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS GRAVE, ONLY SIX FEET DOWN, COWERED JOHN MC GREEVY, AFRAID TO CALL OUT! AND YET HE MUST CALL OUT, OR BE BURIED ALIVE UNDER THE CORPSE THESE PEOPLE MOURNED!
E 81
S. MOSKOWITZ

LATE ONE NIGHT, SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER, JOHN MCGREEVY STEALTHILY SNEAKED INTO A QUIET CEMETERY AFTER ONE OF HIS MANY SUCCESSFUL BURGLARIES...

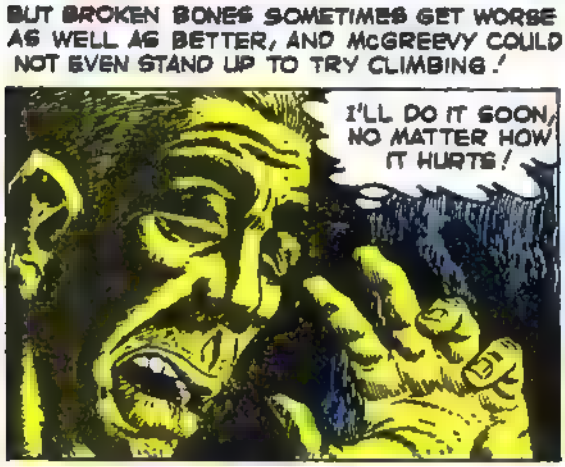
AND PROBABLY, NO ONE EVER WOULD LOOK FOR STOLEN JEWELS... IN AN EMPTY GRAVE!

SO BEAUTIFUL! SO ALIVE! I LOVE TO TOUCH THEM!
YOU ARE ALL I HAVE! BUT YOU ARE ALL I WANT! AND HERE YOU ARE SAFE! SAFE!
LATER THAT NIGHT...
MAYBE I SHOULD TAKE THEM AND GO AWAY! IT'S GETTING TOO RISKY HERE!
NO! I HAVE NO MONEY TO GO AWAY... I WOULD HAVE TO SELL MY BEAUTIFUL JEWELS TO SOMEONE WHO WOULDN'T LOVE THEM AS I DO!
GREEDY JOHN McGREEVY WOULD NEVER SELL THE TREASURE THAT WAS NATURALLY SO CLOSE TO HIS OWN ICE-COLD HEART... HIS ICE-COLD DIAMONDS!
I'LL NEVER SELL THEM! I LOVE THEM TOO MUCH!
AND SO, WEEK AFTER WEEK, McGREEVY ADDED TO HIS STORE OF WEALTH, HIS STORE OF GLITTERING JEWELS, UNTIL ONE NIGHT...
HO! WHO IS THERE? WHO IS THAT?
THE CEMETERY WATCHMAN HEARD FOOTSTEPS, CALLED OUT AND SENT McGREEVY RUNNING TO HIS ONLY HIDING PLACE... THE GRAVE!
I'LL HIDE UNTIL HE GOES AWAY!


I'LL BE SAFE HERE UNTIL HE GOES AWAY! HE'LL THINK HE JUST IMAGINES THE NOISE!

BUT THE THIEF JUMPED TOO FAST AND BROKE HIS ANKLE!
AIEEEE
CRACK

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT HERE UNTIL THE PAIN GOES AWAY! THEN I'LL GET OUT AND GO HOME!

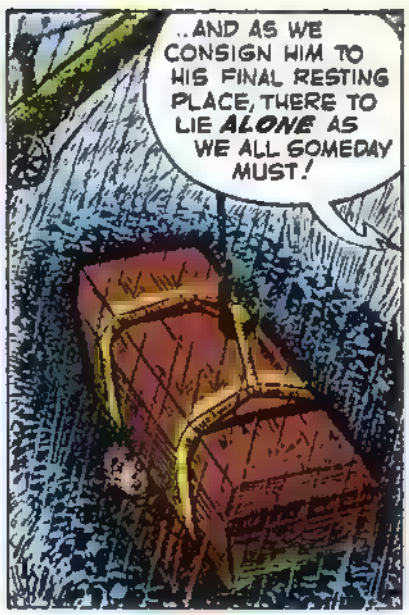

BUT BROKEN BONES SOMETIMES GET WORSE AS WELL AS BETTER, AND McGREEVY COULD NOT EVEN STAND UP TO TRY CLIMBING!
I'LL DO IT SOON, NO MATTER HOW IT HURTS!

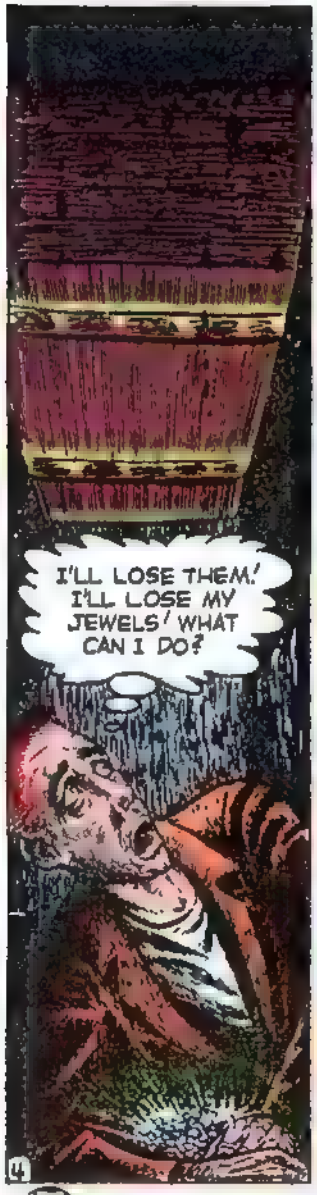
FORCED TO STAY IN THE EMPTY GRAVE, McGREEVY AMUSED HIMSELF THE ONLY WAY HE KNEW!
AT LEAST I HAVE YOU, MY BEAUTIFUL JEWELS...MY LOVELY SPARKLING DIAMONDS!

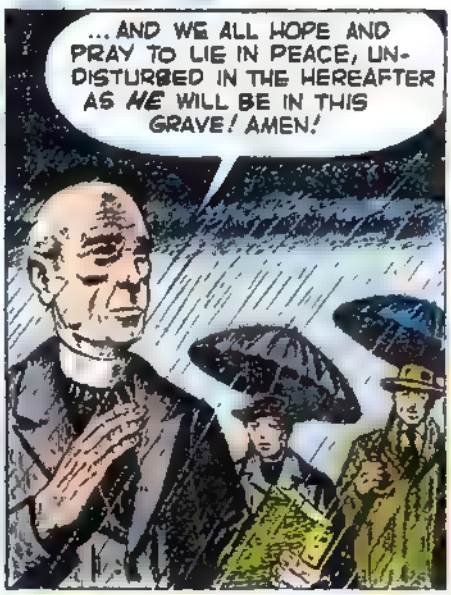
HE KNEW HE SHOULD CALL FOR HELP! JAIL? HE DIDN'T FEAR THAT! BUT THEY WOULD TAKE AWAY HIS BELOVED JEWELS!

BUT McGREEVY WAS GETTING VISITORS! A FUNERAL DREW NEAR HIS HIDING PLACE!

AND THEN JOHN McGREEVY LOOKED UPWARD AT HIS AWFUL FATE!
..SO WE MUST SAY FAREWELL TO OUR DEAR RELATIVE AND FRIEND WHOM WE MOURN TODAY...
NO! NO! NOT HERE! NOT THIS GRAVE!







BUT IT WAS TOO LATE! THE DIRT HAD ALREADY ISOLATED JOHN McGREEVY FROM CONTACT WITH ANYTHING...ANYTHING ALIVE! BUT TO HIM OF COURSE HIS DIAMONDS WERE JUST AS GOOD AS ALIVE!

...AND HIS GREED HAD MADE IT A SURE THING THAT HE WOULD NOW HAVE THEM FOREVER!

ATLAS FOR THE BEST IN WEIRD STORIES LOOK FOR THE ATLAS SEAL ON THE COVER ATLAS

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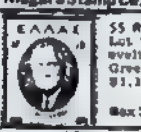

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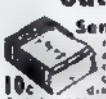

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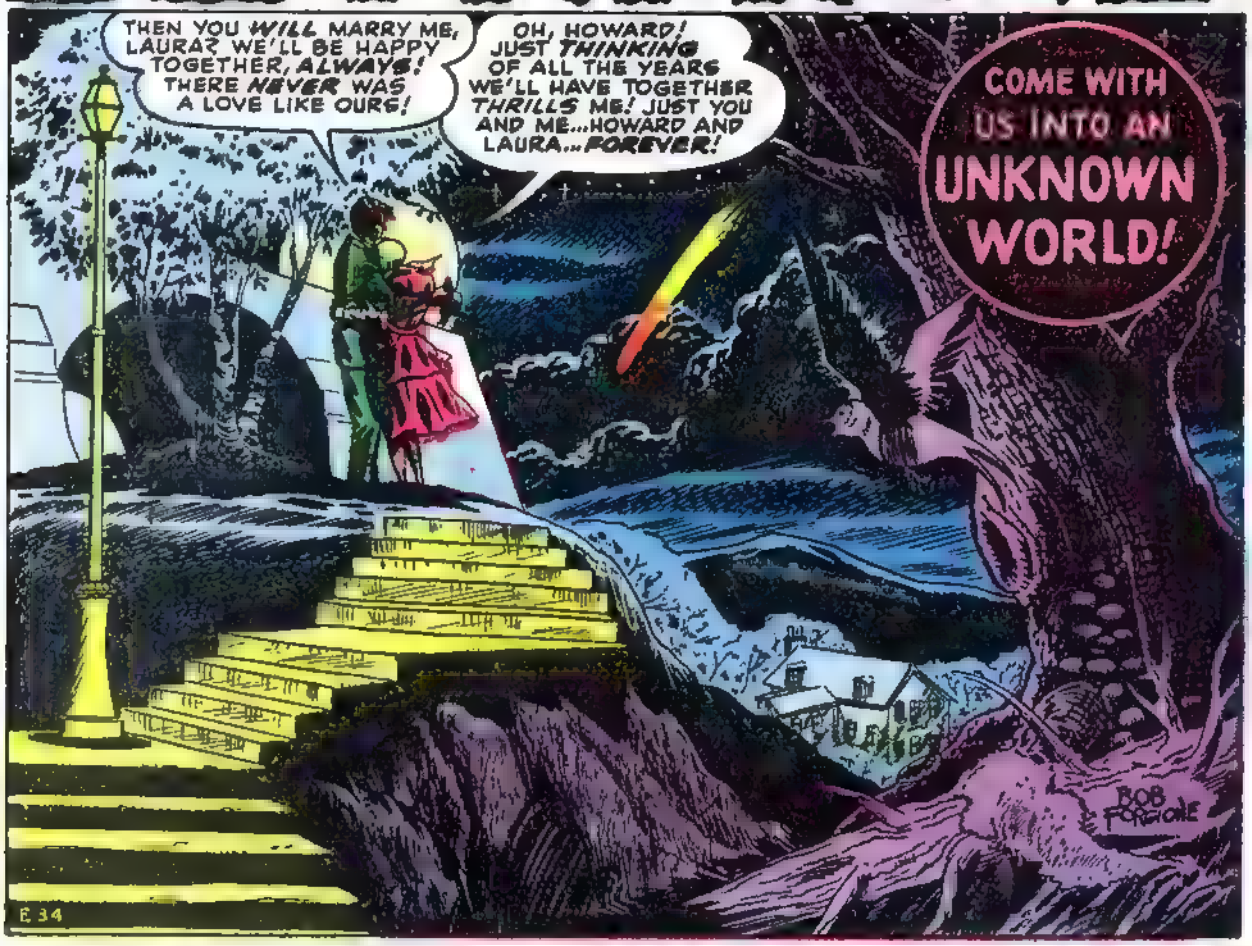
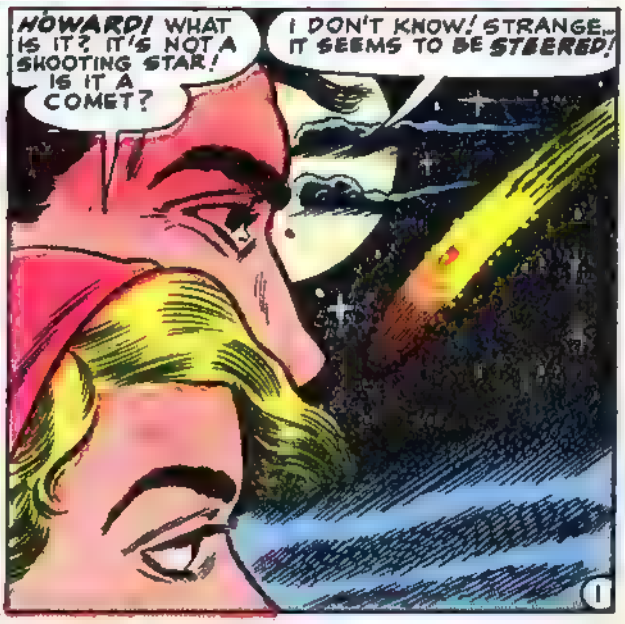
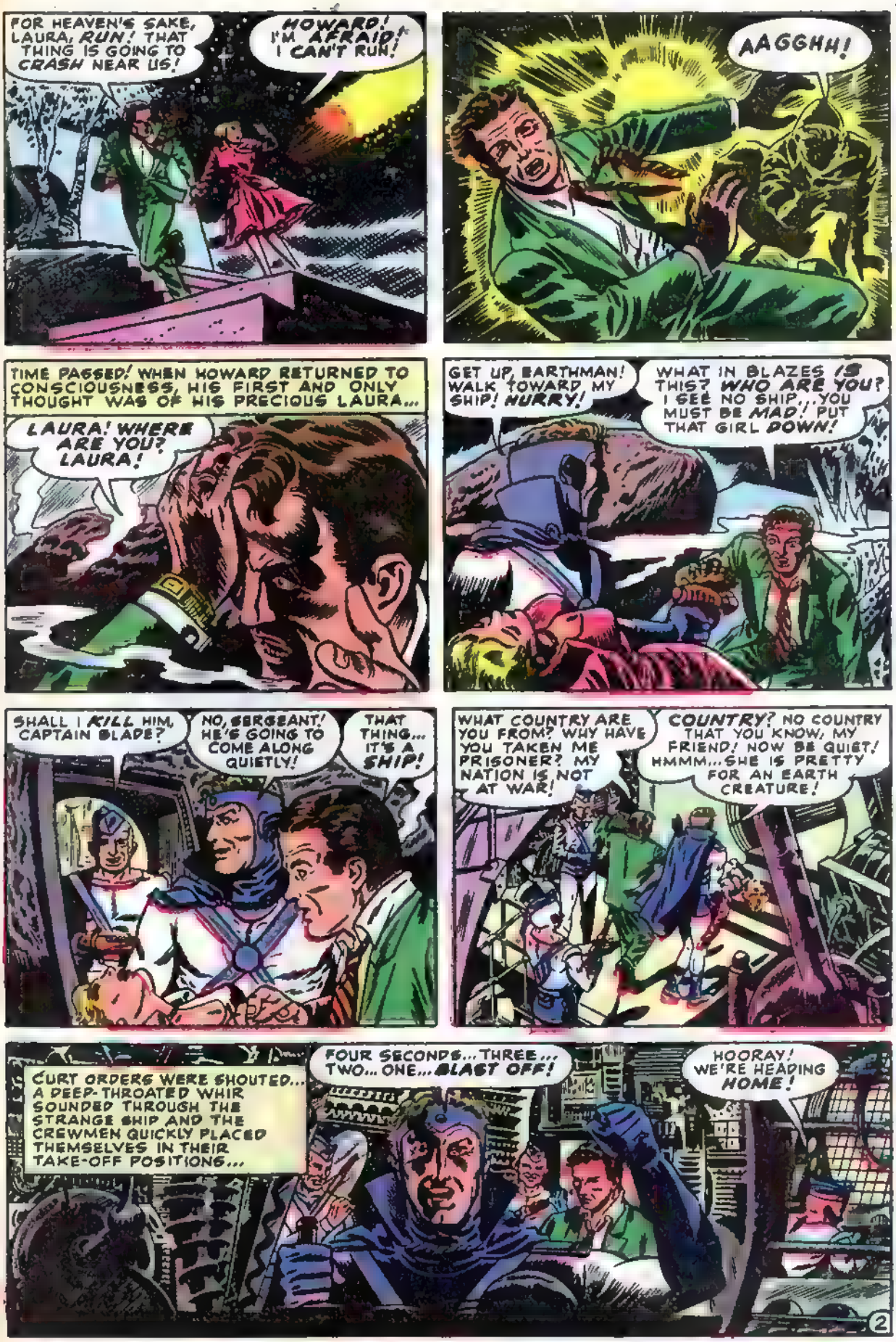
FOR OUR WINDUP, WE'RE HEADING BACK TO OUTER SPACE, WHERE STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING! THIS IS A STORY ABOUT LOVE, TOO... BUT WHEN LOVE IS PUT TO THE TEST, THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT GIVES WAY TO ...

BETRAYAL

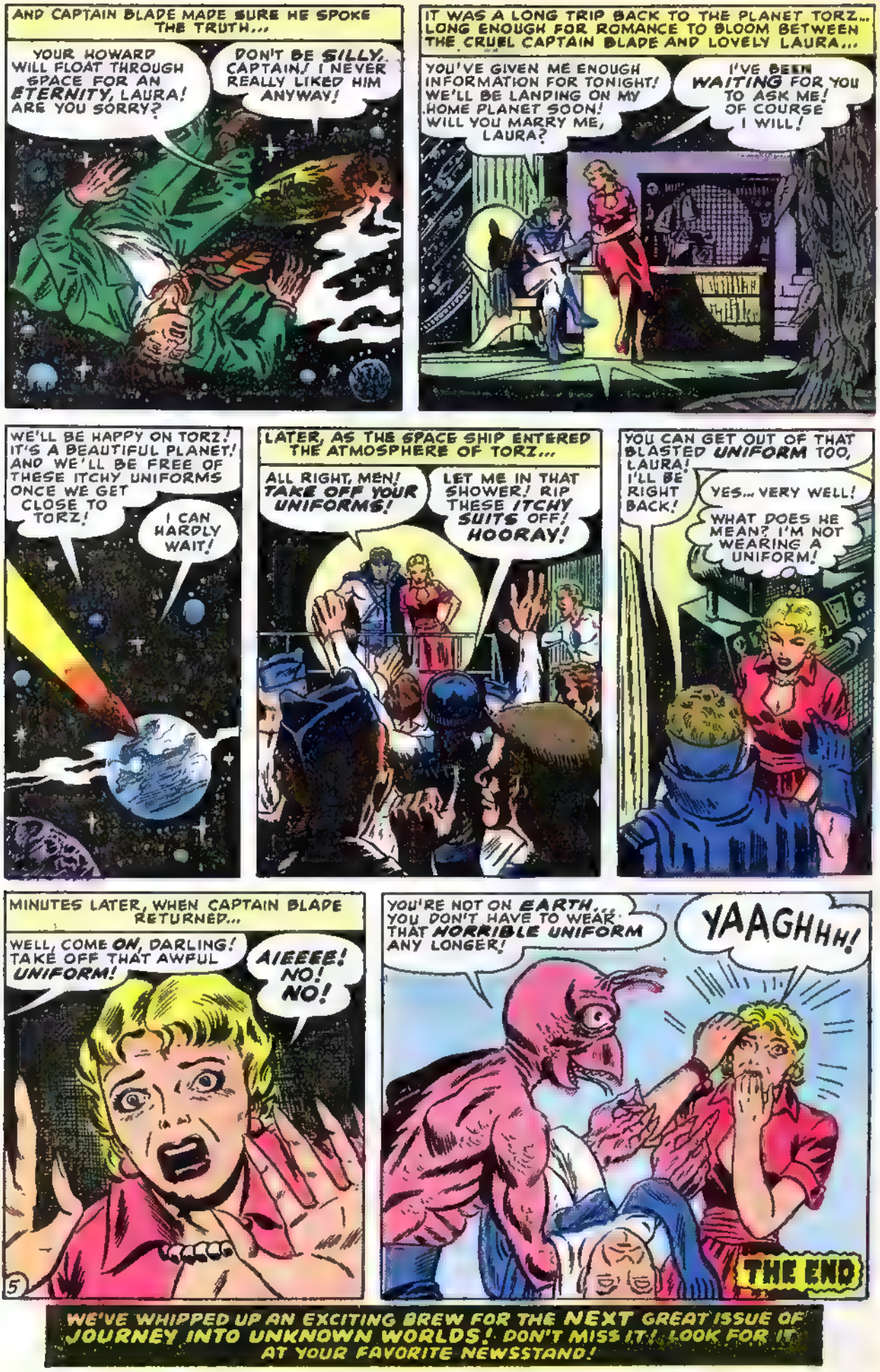

THEN YOU WILL MARRY ME, LAURA? WE'LL BE HAPPY TOGETHER, ALWAYS! THERE NEVER WAS A LOVE LIKE OURS!
OH, HOWARD! JUST THINKING OF ALL THE YEARS WE'LL HAVE TOGETHER THRILLS ME! JUST YOU AND ME...HOWARD AND LAURA...FOREVER!
COME WITH US INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD!
BOB FORGIONE
E 34




FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, LAURA, RUN! THAT THING IS GOING TO CRASH NEAR US!
HOWARD! I'M AFRAID! I CAN'T RUN!
AAGGHH!
TIME PASSED! WHEN HOWARD RETURNED TO CONSCIOUSNESS, HIS FIRST AND ONLY THOUGHT WAS OF HIS PRECIOUS LAURA...
LAURA! WHERE ARE YOU? LAURA!
GET UP, EARTHMAN! WALK TOWARD MY SHIP! HURRY!
WHAT IN BLAZES IS THIS? WHO ARE YOU? I SEE NO SHIP... YOU MUST BE MAD! PUT THAT GIRL DOWN!
SHALL I KILL HIM, CAPTAIN BLADE?
NO, SERGEANT! HE'S GOING TO COME ALONG QUIETLY!
THAT THING... IT'S A SHIP!
WHAT COUNTRY ARE YOU FROM? WHY HAVE YOU TAKEN ME PRISONER? MY NATION IS NOT AT WAR!
COUNTRY? NO COUNTRY THAT YOU KNOW, MY FRIEND! NOW BE QUIET! HMMM... SHE IS PRETTY FOR AN EARTH CREATURE!
CURT ORDERS WERE SHOUTED... A DEEP-THROATED WHIR SOUNDED THROUGH THE STRANGE SHIP AND THE CREWMEN QUICKLY PLACED THEMSELVES IN THEIR TAKE-OFF POSITIONS...
FOUR SECONDS... THREE... TWO... ONE... BLAST OFF!
HOORAY! WE'RE HEADING HOME!

LATER, AFTER THE SHIP HAD ROARED OUT OF EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL FIELD...
WHAT IS IT, HOWARD? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
NEVER MIND, LAURA, EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
IT WILL... IF YOU COOPERATE!
MY MISSION IS TO CAPTURE TWO EARTHLINGS AND FORCE THEM TO REVEAL THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF EARTH'S ABILITY TO WAGE ATOMIC WAR! NOTICE, PLEASE, I USE THE WORD FORCE!
YOU'LL GET NOTHING FROM US! WE'LL DIE FIRST!
THAT'S VERY NOBLE! HOWEVER, DYING ISN'T SO IMPORTANT! IT'S HOW YOU DIE THAT MAY CHANGE YOUR MIND! DEATH CAN BE SLOW... AND PAINFUL!
WE DON'T NEED THESE UNIFORMS NOW, CAPTAIN! CAN I TELL THE MEN TO TAKE 'EM OFF? THEY ITCH! THE MEN CAN'T STAND IT!
NO, YOU CAN'T, SERGEANT! THAT'S THE LAST TIME I'M GOING TO TELL YOU! KEEP THOSE UNIFORMS ON!
EVER SINCE WE BLASTED OFF FROM TORZ, WE'VE HAD THESE ITCHY THINGS ON! I SAY WE TAKE THEM OFF NOW!
WHEN I BRING THIS SHIP BACK TO OUR PLANET, TORZ, WE'LL REMOVE OUR UNIFORMS!
BUT YOU WON'T EVER TAKE YOURS OFF, SERGEANT QUINTO!
YOU SEE I MEAN BUSINESS! ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT EARTH'S WEAPONS, OR DO YOU WISH TO DIE...SLOWLY?
HOWARD! HE'LL KILL US! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!
NEVER! THE BRUTAL SWINE!
5

BRING OUT THE EQUIPMENT! THEY'LL TALK!
WE'VE GOT TO TELL THEM, HOWARD!
NO, LAURA! WE'LL DIE FIRST... IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS!
WE'LL SHOW THEM HOW GREAT OUR LOVE IS, LAURA!
THOSE HOT IRONS... THEY'RE GOING TO BURN US!
NOW WE SHALL BEGIN! I BELIEVE ON EARTH THE WOMAN ALWAYS GOES FIRST!
HOWARD!
REMEMBER, LAURA! I LOVE YOU!
WAIT! I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW! DON'T BURN ME... PLEASE!
LAURA! YOU CAN'T! THEY'LL INVADE EARTH... CONQUER IT! ISN'T OUR LOVE ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU STRONG?
LOVE, YOU FOOL! WHAT GOOD IS LOVE IF YOU'RE DEAD! I'M TIRED OF YOUR BABBLING ABOUT ETERNAL LOVE!
HAH! I THINK HOWARD IS ANGRY! HE CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD CHANGE SO QUICKLY!
YOU LYING MONSTER! YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE!
CAPTAIN BLADE!
I'LL... UKK!
DON'T WORRY, LAURA! HE'LL NEVER TOUCH YOU AGAIN!
4


AND CAPTAIN BLADE MADE SURE HE SPOKE THE TRUTH...
YOUR HOWARD WILL FLOAT THROUGH SPACE FOR AN ETERNITY, LAURA! ARE YOU SORRY?
DON'T BE SILLY, CAPTAIN! I NEVER REALLY LIKED HIM ANYWAY!
IT WAS A LONG TRIP BACK TO THE PLANET TORZ... LONG ENOUGH FOR ROMANCE TO BLOOM BETWEEN THE CRUEL CAPTAIN BLADE AND LOVELY LAURA...
YOU'VE GIVEN ME ENOUGH INFORMATION FOR TONIGHT! WE'LL BE LANDING ON MY HOME PLANET SOON! WILL YOU MARRY ME, LAURA?
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO ASK ME! OF COURSE I WILL!
WE'LL BE HAPPY ON TORZ! IT'S A BEAUTIFUL PLANET! AND WE'LL BE FREE OF THESE ITCHY UNIFORMS ONCE WE GET CLOSE TO TORZ!
I CAN HARDLY WAIT!
LATER, AS THE SPACE SHIP ENTERED THE ATMOSPHERE OF TORZ...
ALL RIGHT, MEN! TAKE OFF YOUR UNIFORMS!
LET ME IN THAT SHOWER! RIP THESE ITCHY SUITS OFF! HOORAY!
YOU CAN GET OUT OF THAT BLASTED UNIFORM TOO, LAURA! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
YES... VERY WELL!
WHAT DOES HE MEAN? I'M NOT WEARING A UNIFORM!
MINUTES LATER, WHEN CAPTAIN BLADE RETURNED...
WELL, COME ON, DARLING! TAKE OFF THAT AWFUL UNIFORM!
AIEEEE! NO! NO!
YOU'RE NOT ON EARTH... YOU DON'T HAVE TO WEAR THAT HORRIBLE UNIFORM ANY LONGER!
YAAGHHH!
THE END
5

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If you mail coupon at once, we will also send, FREE, these two pieces of inflation currency issued in Germany after World War I when regular money was hoarded by panic-stricken Germans. Actually worth 25¢! Very colorful. FREE while supply lasts, *even if you decide NOT to keep Kit!* Mail coupon *now!*

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Littleton, New Hampshire

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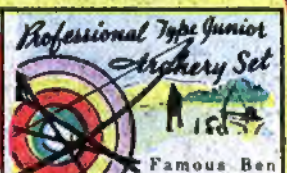

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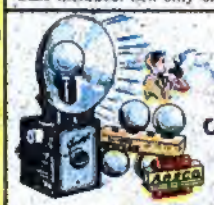

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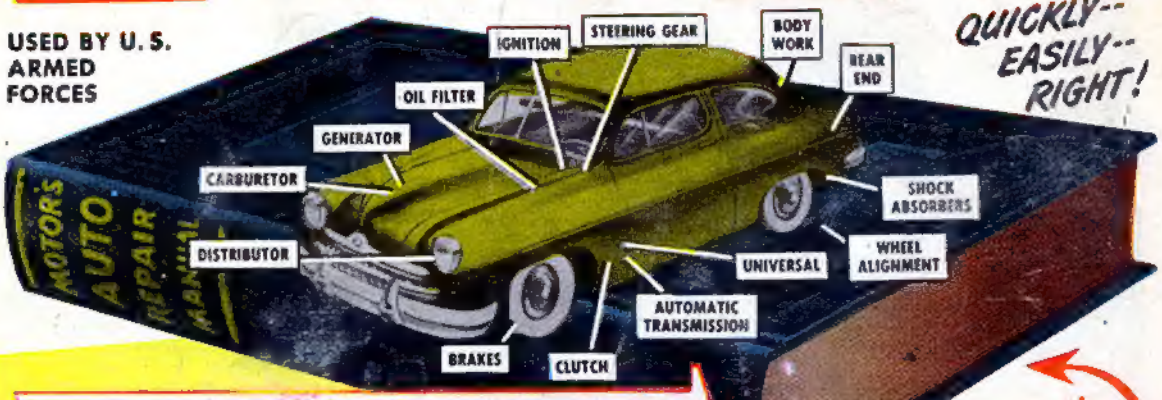

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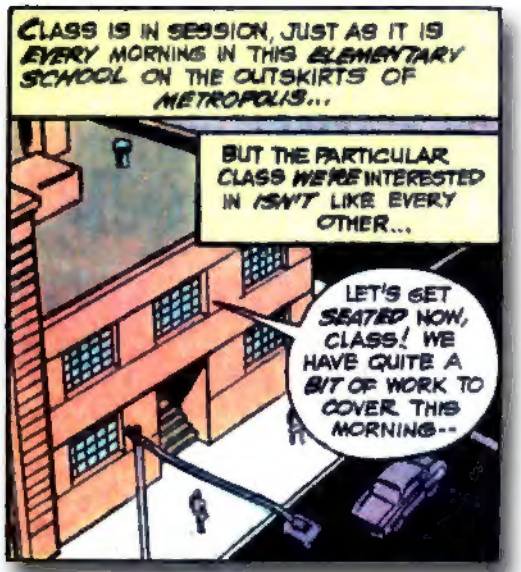
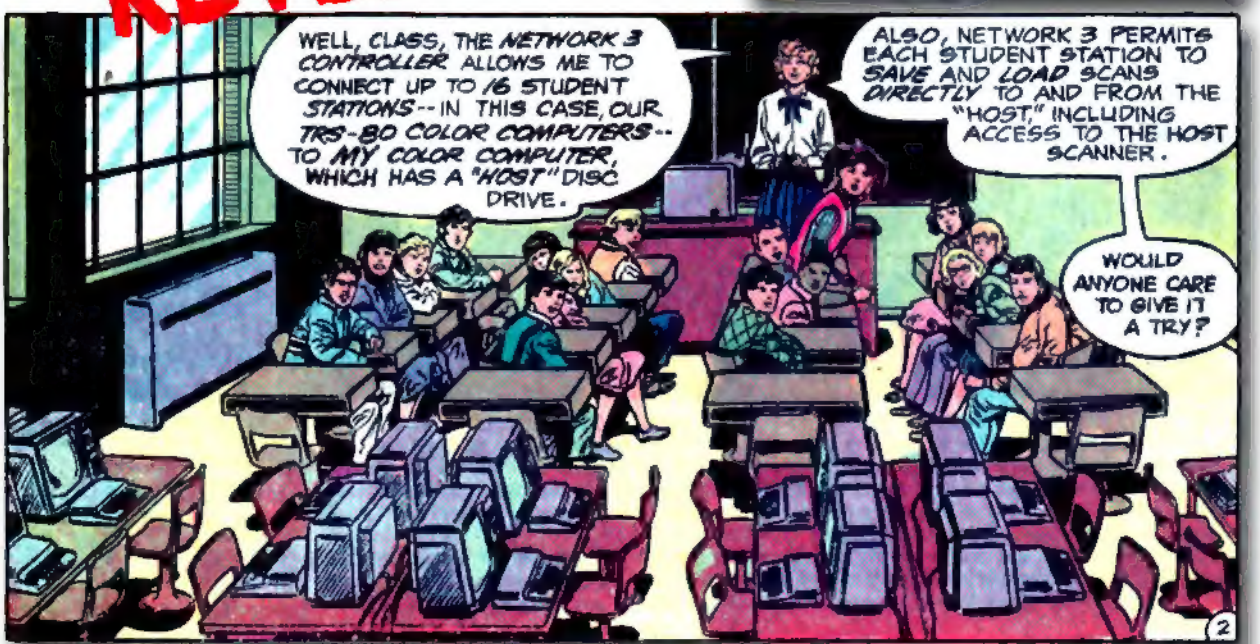
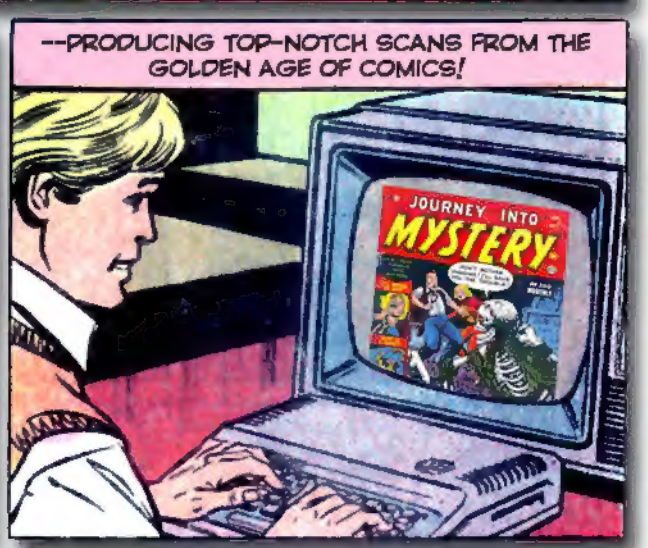

CLASS IS IN SESSION, JUST AS IT IS EVERY MORNING IN THIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF METROPOLIS...
BUT THE PARTICULAR CLASS WE'RE INTERESTED IN ISN'T LIKE EVERY OTHER...
LET'S GET SEATED NOW, CLASS! WE HAVE QUITE A BIT OF WORK TO COVER THIS MORNING--


WELL, CLASS, THE NETWORK 3 CONTROLLER ALLOWS ME TO CONNECT UP TO 16 STUDENT STATIONS -- IN THIS CASE, OUR TRS-80 COLOR COMPUTERS -- TO MY COLOR COMPUTER, WHICH HAS A "HOST" DISC DRIVE.
ALSO, NETWORK 3 PERMITS EACH STUDENT STATION TO SAVE AND LOAD SCANS DIRECTLY TO AND FROM THE "HOST," INCLUDING ACCESS TO THE HOST SCANNER.
WOULD ANYONE CARE TO GIVE IT A TRY?
2

ALL RIGHT, LET'S SWITCH ON OUR COMPUTERS AND GET STARTED.
AND SO, FOR THE NEXT HOUR, THERE IS SILENCE IN THE CLASS-ROOM AS THE SIXTH-GRADERS APPLY THEMSELVES TO THE TASK AT HAND--



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